

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6022

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AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 7325

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SOPN IN PK US

SUBJECT: PRESS COMMENT ON INDO-PAKISTAN AGREEMENT

BEGIN SUMMARY: ALL NEW DELHI ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS
CARRIED EDITORIALS ON THE INDO-PAKISTAN AGREEMENT.
WIDESPREAD COMMENT WAS POSITIVE AND CAUTIOUS.
WELCOMING THE AGREEMENT, OBSERVERS UNIFORMLY STRESSED THE NEED
FOR "CONSIDERABLE CAUTION." END SUMMARY.

1. INDIAN EXPRESS (MAY 17) DECLARED THAT THE NEGOTIATERS
HAVE CHOSEN TO BE "CAUTIOUS." THEY WANT TO
ACHIEVE "WHATEVER CAN BE DONE PROMPTLY TO RESTORE NORMAL,
CORRECT RELATIONS. WAYS TO COME CLOSER WILL BE EXPLORED 'IN DUE
COURSE.'" IT ADDED IF PAKISTAN CAN PERSUADE ITSELF TO
REGARD KASHMIR AS A "CLOSED CHAPTER, THERE IS NO OTHER ISSUE
OUTSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES."

2. STATESMAN (MAY 16) HELD THAT "THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THE
ISLAMABAD AGREEMENT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED AS SMOOTHLY AND
EXPEDITIOUSLY AS IT WAS APPARENTLY CONCLUDED."

3. TIMES OF INDIA (MAY 17) HELD THAT IT IS "NOW
POSSIBLE TO LOOK FORWARD TO NORMAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO
NEIGHBORS. THIS IS SPECIALLY SO IN VIEW OF THE HELPFUL ROLE
THE UNITED STATES AND IRAN HAVE BEEN PLAYING, THE FORMER BY
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EXERCISING RESTRAINT IN THE SUPPLY OF MILITARY HARDWARE TO

PAKISTAN, AND THE LATTER BY USING ITS INFLUENCE IN ISLAMABAD IN FAVOR OF ACCOMMODATION WITH NEW DELHI." IN FURTHER COMMENT IT SAID THAT THE ACCORD DOES NOT "MEAN THAT ISLAMABAD CANNOT AND WILL NOT EVER AGAIN REVERT TO ITS EARLIER INTRANSIGENT STANCE. THAT POSSIBILITY CANNOT BE RULED OUT."

4. HINDUSTAN TIMES (MAY 17) CONCLUDED THAT IN THE SHORT RUN, THE DETAILS OF IMPLEMENTATION HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT CAREFULLY TO AVOID SNARL-UPS".. IN THE LONG RUN, THINGS WOULD DEPEND AS MUCH ON THE BROAD "UNFOLDING OF EVENTS" IN THE SUBCONTINENT AND ELSEWHERE AS ON NEW DELHI AND ISLAMABAD'S "SUCCESS IN AVOIDING CONTENTIONS ISSUES AND PROGRESSIVELY WIDENING AREAS OF AGREEMENT."

5. NATIONAL HERALD (MAY 16) CAUTIONED THAT THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS WILL SHOW WHETHER OR NOT PAKISTAN MEANS BUSINESS.... ON THE WHOLE THE OUTLOOK IS HOPEFUL." 6. PATRIOT (MAY) NOTED THAT THE AGREEMENT CAN BECOME A "TURNING POINT"....PROVIDED IT IS IMPLEMENTED IN A GENUINE SPRIT OF FRIENDLINESS AND THE SPIRIT OF SUB-CONTINENTAL AMITY ENVISIONED AT SIMLA IN 1972."

7. ECONOMIC TIMES (MAY 17) HIGHLIGHTED THAT THE CAUSE OF HARMONIOUS RELATIONS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES OF THE SUB-CONTINENT CALLS FOR GOOD NEIGHBORLINESS, ABSENTION FROM HOSTILE PROPAGANDA AND RENUNCIATION OF FORCE OR A THREAT OF FORCE TO SETTLE ANY PROBLEM WHICH MAY BE IN DISPUTE."

8. FINANCIAL EXPRESS (MAY 17) SAID WHILE THE PRESENT ACCORD "WILL DOUBTLESS RECEIVE GENERAL APPROBATION, THERE IS STILL NEED FOR CONSIDERABLE CAUTION. THE FEVERISH PACE IN WHICH PAKISTAN IS ARMING ITSELF IS A MATTER FOR SERIOUS CONCERN FOR INDIA."SAXBE

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